RAIN-MAKING

Little information is available on the processes of rain-making among the Luo. Roscoe states that it is an important ceremony and is performed by a *musoga* priests who lives among the people for this purpose.(1) According to Northcote, the rain-maker is greatly esteemed, and his homestead is usually found near a big tree which is considered sacred. When rain is wanted, he gathers some herbs, puts them in a large pot of water and boils them under the tree. He draws off a little into another pot and, sucking it up through a reed, squirts it into the air, after first blowing through the reed and making the pot bubble.(2) Evans-Pritchard mentions that the Luo rain-maker is called the *won koth* and that sometimes his functions are combined with those of the *jabilo*. Rain-makers among the neighbouring Bantu seem to have a higher reputation than Luo *jakoth* and are often consulted.

WITCHCRAFT

Sickness is thought to be due either to the malevolence of a ghost or, more frequently, to magic worked by some envious person who wishes to bring misfortune on his victim.(3) In either case the aid of a witchdoctor is sought and he, by means of various incantations, discovers the cause and the culprit. A sorcerer may cause death by spearing the shadow of his victim, by working spells, by hiding certain objects near the house which bring sickness to the inmates. If a ghost is causing trouble the witchdoctor prescribes offerings and sacrifices necessary for appeasement. He also discovers thieves, conducts ordeals and divines the causes of events. He makes counter-magic to defend people against the activities of sorcerers and is the general prescriber of all cures. Johnston mentions a 'deeper magic' (*jamkingo*) which, among the Gemi tribe is practised by the blacksmiths.(4)

LIFE CYCLE

BIRTH

After the birth of a boy the mother stays inside the house for four days; for a girl, she stays inside for three days. The father of the child does not eat or sleep in the hut until the child begins to cut its teeth.

Twins are considered lucky; their arrival is attended by many ceremonies and by propitiatory dances.

PUBERTY

Until marriage, girls help their mothers in the fields and assist them in cooking and carrying. Boys help in herding the animals. At puberty both boys and girls have their front lower teeth extracted and for four days they remain in their homes. After this period they go about visiting

(1) Roscoe, *The Northern Bantu*, 1915, p.292.
(2) Northcote, *J.R.A.I.*, 1907, p.64. (3) *Ibid.*
(4) *The Uganda Protectorate*, Vol.II, 1902.

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843 Dietary restriction may also be a matter of family
262 habit or taboo. Thus a mother may inform her children while they are young that a certain kind of food is not to
[753] be eaten by members of their family. This restriction may result from a fear of spreading certain diseases, generally skin ailments, latent in that particular family group. The restriction does not apply to others who are free from the supposed disease. When a woman gives birth to a baby her habits in these respects do not change.

A dietary restriction may also result from the instruc-
•[756] tion of a medicine man, as in the case of a woman who has had no child for a long time. During his treatment
[784] the medicine man gives instruction on taboos and compulsory dietary restrictions. Dislike of a certain food during pregnancy may also result from personal disagreeable experience. This is also generally assigned to the will of the child. Restraints of a family origin, as well as those imposed by the medicine man and acquired from personal experience, are more strictly adhered to than the traditional restrictions.

843 *Medicinal restrictions.* The list of medicines that expec-
278 tant mothers may not take is a small one. Apart from the traditional strong purgatives and medicines for kill-
177 ing worms, modern drugs like quinine and strong European laxatives are eliminated, such measures being designed to prevent abortion or premature birth.

843 *Social relationship.* Superstitions affecting expectant mothers have very largely yielded to the influence of
[177] Christianity, but we find remnants of old regulations,
[516] such as those connected with sitting, still observed by women. An expectant mother is required to sit with a straight back. Neither should she put one of her legs on top of another, because it is believed that the expected child in assuming a similar position would be difficult to